DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 299 871 HE 021 754

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TITLE The Foreign Teaching Assistant and the Office Hour.
PUB DATE Mar 88
NOTE 15p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (22nd, Chicago, IL, March 8-13, 1988).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Students; *English (Second Language); *Foreign Students; Higher Education; Intercultural Communication; Interpersonal Communication; Questionnaires; *Student Attitudes; *Teacher Student Relationship; *Teaching Assistants

ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted among two groups of undergraduates concerning expectations and attitudes about foreign teaching assistants and consulting teaching assistants during office hours. Two questionnaires were administered by foreign teaching assistants to linguistics and math students during the first and last week of classes, and 54 responses were analyzed. Half of the students showed negative attitudes in their expectations of foreign teaching assistants. Nearly half (48%) did not answer a question eliciting negative comments about their teaching assistants, a result which may be due to teaching assistant involvement in administration of the questionnaires. Large percentages of students in both subjects reported consulting teaching assistants regarding technical problems in assignments. Both questionnaires are appended. Contains 6 references. (KM)

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The Foreign Teaching Assistant & The Office Hour

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The Foreign Teaching-Assistant problem (FTA problem) has been identified and studied from different perspectives in Ard (1987), Constantinides (1987), Rounds (1987), Bailey (1984 and 1982) and many others, and has been correctly described as an emotional issue today, involving American university administrators, congressmen, parents, students and teaching assistants. This paper deals with the Foreign TA problem and how it affects what I consider to be its two most important participants, that is, the students and the FTAs themselves.

The basic research question addressed in this study is, what are the **expectations** of students regarding TAs in general and Foreign TAs in particular. The study aims to investigate student expectations and as far as possible student attitudes towards Foreign TAs. Another aspect of the study is the evaluation of office hours. Office hours are part of the teaching duties of TAs, and, unlike formal classroom-teaching situations, the office hour provides the student and the TA with an opportunity for dialogic discourse or face-to-face interaction, usually on a one-to-one basis. Therefore the office hour is also included in this study and student expectations of TAs in office hour situations are discussed.

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The Foreign TA problem is the problem of employing graduate students, usually PhD students whose native language is not English, as teaching assistants in universities in the USA. It has become a problem because the students of these TAs complain that they cannot understand the Foreign TAs due to differences in language and culture. The Foreign TA problem has assumed enormous proportions within the last 15 years since more and more international students are seeking teaching assistantships in US universities. Constantinides (1987) reports that the exact number of Foreign TAs in American universities is not known but that the Foreign TA is more **visible** today because the number of American PhD students has decreased dramatically. According to statistics released by the IIE (Institute of International Education, New York) and reported in the *TESL Reporter* (July 1987), in the 1986-87 academic year students from South and Southeast Asia continued to represent the largest segment of foreign students in US universities. The largest group of foreign students came from Taiwan, with Malaysia second and China third. This growth in Asian student enrollment contrasts with declining representation from developing nations in Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. The result of this is that the most visible Foreign TA in American universities is an **Asian** TA, and today, the Foreign TA problem has become the problem of the Asian TA.

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Data and Methodology

The data for the study consists of 2 sets of questionnaires distributed to two groups of students. To a lesser extent, student evaluations, observations and fieldnotes of the Investigator of this study who is an Asian Foreign TA herself is used. The questionnaires were distributed in the first week and in the final week of the Fall 1987 semester at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. They were distributed to students in Math 115 and to students in Linguistics 210. The Math department was selected because it has a large group of Foreign TAs. Linguistics 210 was selected for two reasons: first, because it is Introduction to Linguistics and attracts students from a variety of disciplines, and secondly because the Investigator was a TA for this course, along with 2 American TAs.

Student Questionnaire One which consists of 17 questions was distributed in the Math department by TAs during their first section meetings, and in Linguistics 210 it was distributed by the professor at lecture time, in the first week of classes. The purpose of distributing the questionnaires in the first week of the academic year was to tap the students' attitudes towards Foreign TAs, an attempt to get at 'dormitory lore and legend' before classes began. Student Questionnaire One was given out to 140 students in Linguistics 210 and to 3 groups of 24 students each in the Math department. For purposes of this study, 30 questionnaires from Linguistics and 24 from Math (each section had only 24) will be analyzed. Student Questionnaire Two was distributed in the last week of the Fall 1987 semester to the same groups of students, once again during discussion by TAs in the Math department, and during lectures by the professor in Linguistics 210. The purpose of Student Questionnaire Two was to determine if student expectations of TAs and office hours as expressed in Student Questionnaire One, had been realized in the course of the semester.

One of the drawbacks of this kind of data gathering is the involvement of the TAs themselves. Although the professor gave out the questionnaires in Linguistics 210, the TAs including the Investigator were present, and this might or might not have influenced the responses. In the case of the Math department, the professor couldn't have distributed the questionnaires because there were over 600 students in the class, and it was better to have them given out during discussion sections. Once again, the fact that TAs administered the data collection might have influenced student responses.

Overview of Questionnaires

Student Questionnaire One (see Appendix One) begins with a statement informing the students that the purpose of the study is to determine their expectations in office hour consultations. The first four questions deal with biographical information about the students, as

to which department they are in, if they are male or female, if they have had previous experience with TAs and if so, when, where and in what subjects. Questions 5 through 10 ask for student impressions of TAs and for a description of a TA they would like to consult during office hours. Questions 11 through 13 and 16 go back to biographical information of students, if they have lived in non-English speaking countries for 3 months or more, the foreign languages they are fluent in, etc. At this point I would like to state that the purpose of the biographical questions was to find out how much exposure students had to foreign languages, culture and people before attending college. The questions directly pertaining to Foreign TAs were deliberately scattered amidst more general questions to avoid embarrassment to the students who were mostly American. Questions 14 and 15 ask whom the students would consult during office hours, a professor or a TA, or an American TA or a Foreign TA.

Student Questionnaire Two (see Appendix Two) is much more concise since the Investigator realized how impatient students are with long questionnaires. The second questionnaire consists of 10 questions, beginning with an introductory statement that the purpose of the study is to determine if the expectations of students regarding office hours with TAs were realized satisfactorily. Questions 1 through 4 deal with biographical information about the students, and how often they consulted their TAs that semester. Questions 5 and 6 were about Foreign TAs, and Questions 7 and 8 were about TAs in general. The last two questions deal with if they had to make a choice, whom would they consult during office hours, a professor or a TA or an American TA or a Foreign TA and the reason(s) for such a choice.

Results of the study

The results of Student Questionnaire 1 and the comparisons between the two groups will be discussed first. Results of Student Questionnaire Two are discussed next.

The results of the biographical questions in Questionnaire One show that 47% of the students in Linguistics and 25% of the students in Math had encountered TAs as teachers before the Fall term. Most of them reported having had TAs in Math, Engineering, foreign languages, and in English Composition classes, mainly at the University of Michigan. Only 11% in each group had more than one year's experience with TAs as teachers. In response to the question, *Have you heard anything about TAs?* 97% in Linguistics, and 75% in Math, said yes. The follow up question to this was, *What have you heard about TAs*? with the instruction *Circle your impression*, followed by a list of five adjectives ranging from *Very helpful* to *Not helpful, Highly knowledgeable* to *Not knowledgeable* and so on, with a scale of 5 to 1 to select from. The adjectives given were *helpful, knowledgeable, friendly, arrogant* and *accessible* . *Accessible* was added to the list on the recommendation of a student who answered the pilot questionnaire. Students could have added any other comments in the space entitled *Other* with *specify* in

parentheses. *Helpful* was the most popular choice with 65% in Linguistics, and 72% in Math selecting this adjective. *Knowledgeable* and *friendly* were second and third respectively. 65% in Linguistics selected *accesible* with 44% in Math. I should add that only 2% of each group selected *Highly knowledgeable, Very helpful*, etc. The majority selected number 3 on the scale which is a very neutral position.

Comments added to the list by students were generally negative towards all TAs such as *BORING* in capital letters, "*impatient*", "*dumb*", "*don't teach very well*", "*usually I hear horror stories of arrogant TAs* " and so on. There were seven comments referring particularly to Foreign TAs such as "*they Don't speak English*", "*Not native citizens*", "*too many non-American TAs* " etc. One female student instead of circling her impressions, summed them up by saying that TAs are generally "*Males, in their twenties, preppy, in white tennis shoes or in Math, oriental and unintelligible*". There were no positive comments about TAs. One comment which referred to the position of power TAs are in, was "*they can make or break you, dependent on personality or ability.*"

Table 1 is a summary of relevant findings of student expectations of TAs. Group A refers to the students of Linguistics 210 and Group B refers to students in Math 115.

TABLE 1

Results of Student Questionnaire I

	Group A (Ling.)	Group B (Math)
Sample size	n = 30	n = 24
Females	20	06
Males	10	18
7) Reasons for consulting TAs		
to solve a technical problem	97%	100%
to complain about grades	63%	41%
to find out about performance	63%	41%
8) Expectations different for FTAs from US TAs		
negative attitude towards FTAs	15	12
positive attitude towards FTAs	05	01
expectations don't differ	07	08
Blank	03	03
9) Effect of a FTA with an accent		
more interested	03	03
worried about not getting an answer	08	02
wouldn't consult the FTA	02	02
worried about not understanding/being understood	23	16
14) A choice between a Professor and a TA		
professor	30	09
TA	00	11
either	00	04
15) A choice between an American TA and a FTA		
American	17	16
foreign	01	01
either	09	05
Blank	03	02

Table 1 shows the breakdown of the sample to 20 females in Linguistics and 06 females in Math, I have no idea if this is typical or not. Answers to question number 7, *Why would you consult a TA during office hours?* showed the main reason to be to solve a technical problem related to the class. This ties up with a finding of a related study done by the Investigator in 1987 (Gunesekera 1987) where **TAs** were videotaped during office hours and when discussing the videotapes they reported that students consult them during office hours only to find solutions to problems.

In response to question 8, "*If you had a foreign TA how might your expectations be different from an American TA?*" 50% of the students showed negative attitudes in comments such as "*expectations would be lowered*", "*tougher to understand*", "*lack of fluent communication*", "*accents, assumptions that we know things we do not*", from the Math department. Linguistics students on the other hand, showed greater concern about language, in fact 17 comments were made about language. Their negative attitudes are reflected in comments

ranging from "*I would not expect to understand such a teaching assistant*" to tongue in the cheek comments like "*Scared not understand foreign.*" Positive attitudes towards foreign TAs are reflected in unusual comments like, "*I am studying foreign languages and linguistics, for that reason, foreign people and cultures are intriguing to me.*" Neutral comments such as "*Expectations would not be different, we are all humans*" constitute 25% of the answers. Another comment, "*I might expect them to be a bit easier to get a good grade, but harder to understand*" provides evidence for observations made by the Investigator that foreign TAs are considered easy graders.

Question 9, "*If the foreign TA has an accent how would this affect you?*" shows the concern the majority of students have that they won't be able to understand the TA or be understood by the TA, which was the choice of 23 students in Group A and 16 in Group B. At the same time, comments added to this question reflect a certain openness on the part of students as in the case of "*the accent wouldn't make a difference. It might actually be kind of neat*" or "*Depending on the accent it might gain or lose my attention.*" Another comment was, "*a foreign accent would stop me from falling asleep in class.*"

When making a choice between consulting a professor or a TA during office hours, the students in Group A displayed no doubts about their choice in the 100% selection of a professor. On the other hand, 46% of the students in Group B preferred a TA. In the following question on the choice between an American TA and a foreign TA, the majority selected an American TA, while only 1 student in each group preferred a foreign TA. The number of students who said it didn't matter which one they selected was surprisingly high, that is, 09 in Group A and 05 in Group B.

In response to the question, *How would you describe a TA you would like to consult during office hours?* the most common adjectives used were *helpful, friendly and knowledgeable*, in that order. The findings of this question are very similar in the case of both groups. Other phrases such as "*genuinely interested in me", "happy", "down to earth", "easy to communicate with" and "accessible", "has flexible office hours*" were also used. Two extreme attitudes are represented in the negative comment, "*I'd describe a TA I would like to consult as non-existent*" and the ever hopeful, "*Hot, sexy female, mid-twenties.*"

The questions designed to find out the students' background as regards foreign languages and cultures are similar in both groups. The majority have not lived in a non-English speaking country for 3 months or more, and the 30% who have lived in such countries have been to different parts of Europe. 85% of students say there were foreign students in their high schools, and 75% have close friends who are foreigners, but there is no information as to what part of the world the foreigners come from. The foreign languages represented in both groups are mainly

European with a speaker each of Hindi, Korean and Chinese.

Table 2 is a summary of relevant results of Student Questionnaire Two. This was given to find out if the students' expectations of TAs had been realized in that semester.

TABLE 2

Results of Student Questionnaire 2: Were student expectations realized?

	Group A	**Group B**
Sample size	n = 30	n = 24
3) How often TAs were consulted in Fall '87		
never	06	02
once a month	07	08
every week	03	01
now and then	14	13
5) Taught by foreign TAs	17	06
6) Difficulties/problems in dealing with foreign TAs		
Yes (with comments)	03	02
No (with comments)	17	06
Blank	10	16
9) A choice between a professor and a TA		
professor	12	07
TA	15	17
Either	03	00
10) A choice between an American TA and a foreign TA		
American TA	12	17
foreign TA	04	01
either	03	03
Blank (choice left blank, but with comments)	11	03
10) Reasons for selecting an American or foreign TA (the following are students' comments)		
American TAs more 'understandable'	07	11
language problems of foreign TAs	02	02
whoever was more knowledgeable	07	04
doesn't matter	04	02
praise for foreign TAs	04	01
Blank	06	04

As the first item in Table 2 shows there are very few students who do not consult TAs during office hours, but those who do consult them do so rarely. The second item shows that in Group B only 06 students had foreign TAs, while Group A had 17. Of the 17, 14 of them had the Investigator as their foreign TA, in Linguistics. The majority of foreign TAs were in language classes, engineering and math.

In the selection of a professor or a TA, there are no blanks. The number of students

selecting a TA has increased, especially in Group A. The choice of American TA or foreign TA remains largely similar to responses in Student Questionnaire 1 with the exception that there is an increase in comments such as "*whichever was more knowledgeable and friendly, nationality would not matter*". The students who selected a Foreign TA over an American TA said they did so because "*Foreign TAs are usually more interesting to talk to,*" and "*they might be able to understand a beginner's problems with the concepts presented.*" The only student in Math 115 who preferred a Foreign TA said he did so "*because the ones I've had have been especially dedicated.*" Reasons for selecting an American TA were mainly on grounds of better understanding with comments such as "*because on the the whole I've had better luck communicating with TAs whose native language was English.*" A couple of students simply said "*an American TA because I'm American!* "

The biographical information in Student Questionnaire Two shows that all 24 students in Math 115 were freshmen, while Linguistics had 13 Freshmen, 09 Sophomores, 06 Juniors and 02 Seniors. There are 22 females in Linguistics, and 11 in Math. 48% of the students in both groups had not decided or declared their Majors. Of those who had decided, Majors in Linguistics 210 ranged from Political Science, to Economics, Communication, Computer Science, Psychology, Biology, History, Classical Civilization, General Studies, Business, Theatre, and Philosophy. Math 115 does not display such a variety, but represents students from Engineering, Economics, Political Science, Nursing, Chemistry, Biology and Architecture.

In response to the question, *What did you consult your TAs about?* 91% in Linguistics and 63% in Math said it was regarding technical problems in assignments which collaborates with the evidence of Questionnaire One. 36% in Math said they consulted their TAs about grading problems.

Question number 7 asks *What did you like best about your TAs?* with *American and Foreign* in parentheses. 70% of the students in both groups selected *friendly* as their choice. 70% of Math students also chose *knowledgeable* while 57% in Linguistics thought the same. The following question on *what annoyed you the most about your TAs both American and Foreign*, yielded comments like "*spoke too fast,*" "*lack of any teaching skills whatsoever in some classes,*" "*not organized,*" "*not able to explain material for a beginning level,*" "*incapable of adequately explaining and answering questions,*" "*not prepared*" and so on. 48% of the students left this question unanswered which might be the result of TA involvement in the administration of questionnaires.

Conclusions and Implications of this study

I wish to state that this is a preliminary investigation into student attitudes, impressions and

expectations of TAs, and in this sense, my conclusions are tentative. Furthermore, the data sample is small and not as representative as I wish it to be.

I shall first discuss the implications of this study for foreign TA training programs. The basic finding of this study is that student expectations of all TAs as far as teaching skills are concerned, are low. TAs in general are thought to be more **helpful** than knowledgeable or skillful. Based on this analysis of student expectations, and fieldnotes of the Investigator the major change recommended in foreign TA training programs is that training should be for all TAs, not only foreign TAs. No doubt this is a difficult suggestion from the point of view of finances and personnel to conduct training, but it is recommended because of student views that most TAs lack teaching skills. This finding ties up with Rounds (1987) where she talks of developing communicatively competent classroom discourse. Developing strategies for communicatively competent classroom discourse would, I believe, benefit all TAs, native speakers and non-native speakers alike.

Another related comment is that training for all TAs would minimize to some extent the feeling of insecurity and injustice Foreign TAs have as a result of the fact that American TAs i.e. native speakers of English are not screened or evaluated before being appointed as TAs in many universities. The screening of foreign TAs has become mandatory in some US universities, but it is not only language skills which are evaluated in some instances, as in the University of Michigan where both language and teaching ability, i.e. communicative competence in the classroom is evaluated. Another factor is that even Foreign TAs teaching their native languages may be evaluated for linguistic and teaching capabilities, and so, it would be appropriate for all TAs to be subject to training if not screening. If this is too ambitious a project, all TAs whether native speakers or foreign who have prior teaching experience, i.e. having taught American undergraduates for a certain period of time can be initially exempt from training, and would be eligible for training depending on evaluation from students and departmental personnel.

Bailey (1982) concludes that undergraduates at UCLA prefer their TAs to use a friendly, interactive teaching style, and this study concurs with such a view from students at the University of Michigan. Student reactions are favorable towards helpful, friendly, knowledgeable, and accessible TAs. By helpful and friendly students mean TAs who in their words are "*genuinely interested in me*", "*on a first name basis*", and "*show willingness to help.*" Knowledgeable refers to being knowledgeable about the subject matter and ability to explain concepts in the field of study. At this point I wish to make an aside about handbooks for TAs which state that TAs should honestly admit when they don't know the answer. I believe this is inappropriate for TAs who are in an indeterminate position midway between students and professors. Since they have neither the academic background nor the professional status of a professor, admitting ignorance only creates contempt in the minds of students. The term accessible which is frequently used in

this investigation refers to accessibility in physical terms, i.e. holding office hours in a place students are familiar with, extending official office hours by being flexible about meeting students outside office hours, and being available for consultation by phone. All these requirements add up to a heavy toll of expectations from TAs in terms of accessibility, but in practical terms displaying willingness to help rather than showing impatience and what some students called "*rushing to finish their own work*" is what students require of TAs.

As the results of Student Questionnaire Two show, the majority of students do not make use of office hours, but they feel secure presumably about being able to utilize them if and when necessary. In Questionnaire One for the last question which was optional, as to *Any comments on office hours and/or on TAs*, some comments were, "*More hours please,*" "*Expand office hours* "*and* "*More flexible office hours.*" Therefore, from the students' point of view, office hours are considered useful. From the TAs' point of view, it appears that office hours are an opportunity for them to get to know their students, if the students make use of the opportunity. In a questionnaire distributed to Foreign TAs during a training course in August 1987, at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 21 Foreign TAs responded positively to the question, *Do you think office hours are useful, and why?* The Foreign TAs said office hours are useful because it gives them an opportunity to get to know the students on an individual basis, something that cannot be done in a formal classroom situation. Unfortunately, many TAs, especially Foreign TAs are not consulted during office hours, as the results of a previous study by the Investigator show (Gunesekera 1987). Of course, student consultations also depend on the type of course taught. For instance, a course which has many assignments which count towards the final grade is likely to result in more student consultations with TAs than one which has only 2 exams for the semester. One way of encouraging or ensuring student consultations is by asking students who perform badly in evaluated work to meet the TA during office hours. This can be done through notes on quizzes and assignments which are returned to them. In this way, students who have problems will not feel inhibited about consulting the TA, and the TA gets an opportunity to give individual attention which is greatly appreciated by students. Therefore my conclusion is that office hours can be made use of not only by students, but by TAs too.

The language problem of Foreign TAs is the most frequently commented on by students, i.e. Foreign TAs who are considered "*Oriental and Unintelligible*". That the language problem of Foreign TAs is recognized is one of the results of this study, that is students **expect** foreign TAs to be difficult to understand. This problem as far as Foreign TAs are concerned can be solved to some extent with TA training programs such as those conducted at the University of Michigan to improve the communicative competence of Foreign TAs, and by exploiting the openmindedness shown by 40% of the students. This openmindedness is their willingness to give the Foreign TAs a chance to prove themselves. In other words the prejudice against Foreign TAs is not as

strongly established as suspected, and by exposing students to experienced Foreign TAs, the prejudice can be carefully erased to some extent. As evidence of the openmindedness of students, I wish to quote from student evaluations of one Foreign TA recieved in Fall 1987. "*Superb job!! I can't say enough about the manner of your teaching - It is very clear and easily understood. I once had doubts about Foreign TAs, but no longer. Thanks for caring about your students and willingness to help, have a wonderful year.*" Another comment was "*I was worried about getting a foreign TA; but she is the best teacher I have had so far, she is always willing to help and explain things.*" This impressionable attitude of undergraduates can be made use of by TA trainers, to halt the spread of prejudice any further.

Another related fact is about informing students of the culture, civilizations and history of Asian countries. As the biographical information in the questionnaires show, the majority of students have 'connections' with Europe in the sense of visiting European countries and studying European languages. If undergraduates are given similar exposure to Oriental cultures, attitudes regarding "*Oriental and unintelligible*" can be modified. Just as much as Foreign TAs are prepared to become communicatively and liguistically competent in American university culture, so should American undergraduates be prepared to travel to meet them halfway, especially since 40% of the students of this study display encouraging signs of willingness such as in the comment, on the choice between an American TA and a foreign TA: "*Whichever TA was willing to help me! If it is hard to understand someone, you can still communicate if you are both willing to work at it.*"

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Appendix One

Student Questionnaire I

The purpose of this study is to determine the expectations of students and TAs in office hour consultations. The questions that follow are designed to find out what your expectations of TAs are in general, and what you expect from them during office hours. We believe that answering this questionnaire will help you think about how you can achieve your expectations when consulting TAs. Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated.

1. Name of department:

2. Circle one: Male Female

3. Have you had any experience with TAs in the past? a. Yes b. No

4. If yes,

When?

Where?

Subject taught?

5. Have you heard anything about TAs? a. Yes b. No

6. If yes, what have you heard? (Circle your impression)

That they are

a. very helpful	5	4	3	2	1	not helpful
b. highly knowledgeable	5	4	3	2	1	not knowledgeable
c. very friendly	5	4	3	2	1	not friendly
d. very arrogant	5	4	3	2	1	not arrogant
e. highly accessible	5	4	3	2	1	not accessible

f. other (specify):

7. Why would you consult a TA during office hours? (circle as many as appropriate)

a. to solve a problem related to the class

b. to complain about a grade

c. to find out how you are doing in the course

d. other (specify):

8. If you had a foreign TA how might your expectations be different from an American TA?

9. If the foreign TA has an accent how would this affect you? (circle as many as appropriate)

a. you would be more interested

b. you would be worried that you wouldn't get an answer to your question

c. you wouldn't consult the TA during office hours

d. you would worry that you won't understand and/or won't be understood

e. other (specify):

10. How would you describe a TA you would like to consult during office hours?

11. Have you ever lived in a non-English speaking country for 3 months or more?

a. Yes b. No

If yes, where?

12. Were there foreign students in your high school? a. Yes b. No

13. Do you have close friends who are foreigners? a. Yes b. No

14. If you had a choice whom would you consult during office hours?

a. a professor b. a TA

15. If you had a choice, whom would you consult during office hours?

a. an American TA b. a foreign TA

16. Are there any languages you are fluent in other than English?

a. Yes b. No

If yes, what are they?

17. OPTIONAL

Any comments on office hours and/or on TAs?

Appendix Two

Student Questionnaire II

The purpose of this study is to determine if the expectations of students regarding office hours with TAs were realized satisfactorily. The questions that follow are designed to find out if your expectations of TAs (in all your courses) were met. We believe that answering this questionnaire will help you think about how you achieved your expectations during consultations with TAs this term. **Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated.**

1. a.What year are you at the U-M? (Please circle one)

Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

1. b. Please circle one: male female

2. Major:

3. How often did you consult your TAs this term?

a. never b. once a month c. every week d. now & then

4. The consultations were regarding

a. grades b. lectures c. assignments d. administration

Other: (specify)

5. Did you have any foreign TAs? a. yes b. no

In what subjects?

6. Did you have particular problems/difficulties in dealing with foreign TAs? If yes, what are they?

7. What did you like best about your TAs (American and foreign TAs)? That they were

a. knowledgeable b. friendly c. understanding d. accessible

Other (specify):

8. What annoyed you most about your TAs? That they were

a. inaccessible b. ignorant c. unfriendly d. unsympathetic

Other (specify):

9. If you had a choice, whom would you consult during office hours?

a. a professor b. a TA

10. If you had to make a choice, whom would you consult during office hours?

a. an American TA b. a foreign TA WHY?